

Message Text

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43

ACTION SY-07

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FM AMEMBASSY SOFIA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 8508

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: ASEC, PFOR, BU

SUBJECT: BULGARIAN SECURITY PROTECTION OF EMBASSY

1. DURING MORNING OF AUGUST 20 BULGARIAN MILITIA IN FORCE (UP TO 10 MEN) CORDONED OFF EMBASSY STREET TO VEHICLE TRAFFIC AND FORCED PEDESTRIANS TO USE SIDEWALK ON OPPOSITE SIDE OF STREET. BY LATE MORNING AUGUST 21 BARRIERS WERE REMOVED, STREET OPEN TO NORMAL PEDESTRIAN TRAFFIC AND OFFICIAL VEHICLES WITH FOUR UNIFORMED MILITIA MEN PRESENT.
 2. AFTERNOON AUGUST 21, DCM WAS CALLED TO FONMIN TO SEE DEPUTY CHIEF OF PROTOCOL KALINIKOV WHO OPENED CONVERSATION BY REFERRING TO "DREADFUL MURDER" OF AMBASSADOR DAVIES. THEN EXPLAINED THAT BECAUSE GOB DID NOT WANT SIMILAR TERRIBLE DEED TO BE COMMITTED ON ITS TERRITORY, SECURITY PROTECTION FOR US EMBASSY HAD BEEN INCREASED CONSIDERABLY. STRESSED THAT IF EMBASSY BELIEVED PROTECTION WAS UNNECESSARY IT WOULD BE WITHDRAWN. DCM THANKED KALINIKOV FOR HIS CONCERN, SAID WE HAD NOTED INCREASED SECURITY AROUND EMBASSY AND REMINDED HIM OF GOB'S RESPONSIBILITY FOR OUR SAFETY. ADDED THAT EMBASSY WAS NOT IN POSITION TO EVALUATE POSSIBLE DANGER TO EMBASSY OR ITS STAFF AND ASKED IF GOB HAD ANY SPECIAL INFORMATION THIS REGARD. KALINIKOV DID NOT RESPOND TO THIS QUESTION BUT PRESSED REGARDING LEVEL OF SECURITY WE THOUGHT APPROPRIATE. DCM SAID LEVEL OF SECURITY SHE OBSERVED ON HER WAY TO FONOFF
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SEEMED MORE APPROPRIATE (THREE MILITIA MEN IN ADDITION TO

THE USUAL ONE, AND CONTROLLED VEHICLE TRAFFIC) THAN PREVIOUS LEVEL OF HAVING EMBASSY COMPLETELY CORDONED OFF. ADDED PRESENT LEVEL WOULD BE ACCEPTABLE UNTIL FURTHER NOTICE EXPLAINING AMBASSADOR IN PLOVDIV FOR THE DAY AND HE WOULD NEED TO CONSIDER QUESTION BEFORE EMBASSY COULD GIVE ANY DEFINITIVE REPLY. DCM OBSERVED THAT EMBASSY HAD BEEN CORDONED OFF A NUMBER OF TIMES (CHILEAN AND MIDDLE EAST EVENTS) DURING HER STAY IN SOFIWKUT THIS WAS FIRST TIME FONMIN HAD OFFERED EXPLANATION. THIS CONSIDERED STEP IN RIGHT DIRECTION AND WE HOPE IT BECOMES COMMON PRACTICE.

3. WE INTEND TO CALL OFF ADDITIONAL PROTECTION IN A DAY OR TWO PROVIDING CYPRUS SITUATION DOES NOT DETERIORATE FURTHER. ACCORDING TO THE GREEK AMBASSADOR THERE ARE 80 CYPRIOT STUDENTS IN SOFIA AND ALTHOUGH WE CONSIDER IT HIGHLY UNLIKELY AN ATTACK ON THE EMBASSY COULD OCCUR WITHOUT BULGAR INVOLVEMENT, IT IS POSSIBLE.
HERZ

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